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availed himself of the work of other authors, such as the delightful *Le Siècle des Artevelde* of Vanderkindere and the *Essai sur le Rôle Politique et Social des Ducs de Bourgogne dans les Pays-Bas* of Paul Frederique, while he touches but lightly on the story of the northern provinces of the Netherlands, leaving that to his Holland colleague, Professor Blok. It is, however, just this political story, necessarily a condensed narrative, that makes this volume less individual in its effect than its predecessor. Condensed history is always hard reading, and it would be easier to take each section in an elaborated form as indicated by the references.

But in a chapter like that on the city in the fourteenth century Pirenne is at his best. In her municipal evolution, as in other processes of development, he regards Belgium as the experiment field for Europe, and his interest is therefore apart from local considerations. His own studies on various phases of this subject have been detailed, as can be seen in such articles of his as "L'Origine des Constitutions Urbaines, au Moyen Âge," "La Hanse Flamande de Londres," and others, and he must command a hearing even if all his conclusions be not accepted, as for instance, the municipal origin in the merchant community.

The exclusion of all details of purely local importance gives direct force to the argument, but also paints the text with a somber tint. In sum, it may be said that the best gift offered by the Ghent professor is bibliographical. This volume has a peculiar value as a splendid pathfinder to various phases of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as they can be seen in the Netherlands. With this and his new edition of the *Bibliographie de l'Histoire de Belgique* Pirenne has rendered great service to students.

RUTH PUTNAM.

La Lettre et La Carte de Toscanelli sur la Route des Indes par l'Ouest. Addressées en 1474 au Portugais Fernam Martins et Transmise plus tard à Christophe Colomb. Étude Critique sur l'Authenticité et la Valeur de ces Documents et sur les Sources des Idées Cosmographiques de Colomb suivie des Divers Textes de la Lettre de 1474 avec Traductions, Annotations et Fac-similé. Par HENRY VIGNAUD, Premier Secrétaire de l'Ambassade des Etats-Unis, Vice-Président de la Société des Americanistes de Paris, etc. (Paris: Ernest Leroux, Editeur. 1901. Pp. xxvi, 319.)

Toscanelli and Columbus: (Then follows as sub-title a translation of the above). (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co.; London: Sands and Co. 1902. Pp. xix, 365.)

La Solution de Tous Les Problèmes Relatifs à Christophe Colomb et, en Particulier, de celui des Origines ou des Prétendus Inspirateurs de la Découverte du Nouveau Monde. Par M. GONZALEZ DE LA ROSA, Membre de la Société des Americanistes de

Paris, Ancien Professeur de l'Université de Lima, etc. [Mémoire extrait du Compte rendu du Congrès International des Américanistes, tenu en Septembre 1900.] (Paris: Ernest Leroux. 1902. Pp. 22.)

A LITTLE over thirty years ago Mr. Henry Harrisse challenged the authenticity of Ferdinand Columbus's *Life of Christopher Columbus*, which a generation earlier Irving had pronounced "the corner stone" of American history. Mr. Harrisse's startling skepticism led to a protracted controversy which is not yet closed. Even more startling and equally unsettling in its possible effects upon the accepted history of the discovery of America is the recent impeachment of the authenticity of the Toscanelli letters, upon the basis of which D'Avezac in 1871 pronounced Toscanelli "the initiator of the discovery of America."

Inasmuch as the elevation of Toscanelli to this pre-eminence is distinctly the product of modern critical scholarship, for it dates from Humboldt and is not a long-standing tradition of uncertain origin, or merely the assertion of a preface and a title-page of a translation of a lost original, the contention of Señor de la Rosa and of Mr. Vignaud at first sight seems far more improbable and much less likely to be established than was the case with Mr. Harrisse's attack on the *Historie* in 1871. The discrediting of the Toscanelli letters originated with Señor de la Rosa, formerly a professor in the University of Lima, but for the last ten years engaged in critical studies relating to Columbus. He published his conviction in 1899 "that the pretended correspondence of Columbus with astronomers played no part in the discovery of America." In 1900 he read the paper, whose title is given above, before the International Congress of Americanists. Before this he had convinced Mr. Vignaud, who had been long engaged in the study of the early Portuguese voyages, that the reasons for rejecting the Toscanelli letters were valid, and Mr. Vignaud had begun a special investigation of the subject, the results of which he presented at the same Congress. Señor de la Rosa, not being ready to publish, placed at his disposal a good deal of material, and in the course of his studies and in writing the book Mr. Vignaud developed many arguments of his own and arrived at conclusions divergent in important respects from those of Señor de la Rosa. The exact relation between the two critics is clearly stated in the dedicatory letter and preface to the French edition of Mr. Vignaud's book. So far as I know, Señor de la Rosa has not published anything later than his paper of two years ago. During the last year, however, Mr. Vignaud has prepared an English edition of his work with revisions and considerable additions and also replies to several of his reviewers.

The question at issue is so complicated that in the space available for this review it will be possible only to outline the most important arguments urged against the authenticity of the Toscanelli letters, to comment upon some of them, to point out some instances in which the arguments are certainly pushed too far, or in which the evidence is not correctly

interpreted, and, finally, to give some general impression of the present status of the controversy.

The negative evidence as summarized by Mr. Vignaud consists of the following points: (*a*) The originals of these documents no longer exist and no one is on record as ever having seen them. (*b*) Of Fernam Martins, Canon of Lisbon and adviser of Alfonso V., to whom the first Toscanelli letter was addressed, no trace can be found in the Portuguese chronicles or archives. (*c*) No mention of or reference to Toscanelli has been found in these chronicles and archives. (*d*) There is no trace outside these documents in question that as early as 1474 the project of crossing the Atlantic had been thought of in Portugal. (*e*) The contemporary Italian authors who mention Toscanelli and describe his literary activities knew nothing of any such correspondence or that he ever took any interest in an ocean route to the Indies. (*f*) No reference to this subject has ever been found in Toscanelli's papers. (*g*) Columbus in all the years he was trying to get a hearing never referred to Toscanelli's authority in support of his project, nor later in his journal, letters, or marginal notes where he refers to many authorities, is there any reference to Toscanelli. (*h*) The Latin text of the letter to Martins is too ill-written to have come from a Florentine scholar of the Renaissance. (*i*) Las Casas had not seen the original text of this letter and gives us no satisfactory account of how he got hold of the correspondence except that it was in the Columbus materials that he got from the family. (*j*) The author of the *Historie* does not tell where he got them. (*k*) In 1474 the question of a route to the East Indies and of participating in the spice-trade had not arisen in Portugal. (*l*) King Alfonso was not giving any attention in 1474 to new explorations. If he had been, his own sailors would have been his best authorities, and not a Florentine scholar. (*m*) The letter to Martins is based on the cosmographical system of Marinus of Tyre, which is known to us only through Ptolemy, which was not printed in 1474. (*n*) Toscanelli might have known this system from a manuscript of Ptolemy, but as Ptolemy explicitly confutes the deductions of Marinus from the facts known to him, a scientific man like Toscanelli would not have adopted Marinus's views. (*o*) The geographical and political nomenclature of the letter follows Marco Polo. In fact, it had been obsolete for a century and a half in China, yet in the letter there is an account of an interview which Toscanelli had with an ambassador from China (of whose presence in Italy there is elsewhere no record) yet without learning that the Polo nomenclature was no longer in use. (*p*) The cosmographical ideas in the letter are identical with those of Columbus; these ideas he expressly and explicitly attributes to the *Imago Mundi*, Marco Polo, Mandeville and Ptolemy, and he never mentions Toscanelli. (*q*) The second Toscanelli letter, written to Columbus, is practically identical with the Martins letter and is apparently the first draft of it. (*r*) The map which Columbus had on his voyage indicated certain islands in the mid Atlantic; these indications he relied upon confidently; of the existence of such islands Toscanelli could not have known nor

would Columbus, the seaman, have relied so surely on the conjectures of a mere scholar (pp. 245-249 of the Eng. ed.). It will be conceded that this array of negative evidence is formidable if not convincing. It certainly reveals much that is in a high degree perplexing.

I will now make a few running comments on some of these arguments to indicate their strength or weakness. It is certainly a striking fact, if King Alfonso asked for a statement of Toscanelli's views and received it, that no reference to it is to be found in the contemporary chronicle of Ruy de Pina or in the archives, or in the elaborate history of the Portuguese discoveries that Joao de Barros wrote in the next century based on the contemporary chronicles and archives. Especially striking, however, is the absence of any such indication in the accounts given by Barros of Columbus's presentation of his case to the King of Portugal of any knowledge on the part of King John, or of the junta of scientific men, or of Columbus, that, some ten years before, King Alfonso had inquired of Toscanelli and received the answer that the project of a western voyage to Cipangu was perfectly practicable. Could King John and his geographers have been ignorant of the fact, or could Columbus have refrained from referring to it if he had received a letter from an eminent scientific man, mentioning that he had recommended such a plan to the King? Our Portuguese authorities simply say that to King John Columbus seemed a boastful man and that the geographers thought his words about Cipangu mere chatter and all derived from Marco Polo. (Barros Dec. I., Bk. III., ch. XI.) Mr. Vignaud mentions this silence (p. 38) but does not press the argument as much as he might.

Again, if Toscanelli had given such thought to the problem of a western route to the Indies and had corresponded with the Portuguese court and with the subsequent discoverer of the New World it is very difficult to explain why his intimate friend Vespasiano da Bisticci, who lived till 1498, gives not the slightest intimation of the fact in his life of Toscanelli. In Vespasiano's admiring pages Toscanelli is the accomplished ascetic scholar and charitable pious physician, the greatest astrologer of his age and the friend of the leading Florentine literary men; but of Portugal, the spice-trade, the Indies or Christopher Columbus, there is not a line. (See Bartoli's ed. of Vespasiano's *Vite de Uomini Illustri*, pp. 291, 475, 481 and 507-509.) A comparison of Vespasiano's two-page sketch with Uzielli's 780 folio pages is at least suggestive. Mr. Vignaud's treatment of Vespasiano's silence is limited to a mere mention of the fact but it deserves elaboration.

The silence of Columbus in regard to Toscanelli during the tedious years when he was trying to get a hearing is almost inexplicable. The absence of any reference to Toscanelli amid the display of authorities in his later writings, ranging from Aristotle to the fourth book of Esdras and from Marco Polo to John Mandeville, is hardly less perplexing. It is easy to say with Ruge, that this was only one of the many deceptions of Columbus, but that explanation still leaves ground for perplexity.

One of the arguments upon which Mr. Vignaud places the greatest

reliance, is that in 1474 the Portuguese had no thought of participating in the spice-trade or of circumnavigating Africa, and of thus reaching the Indies, and that consequently they could have no interest in a westward route to the Indies at that date. To prove that Prince Henry had no thought of getting around the southern end of Africa Mr. Vignaud gives a forced and, I believe, an indefensible interpretation to the words "Oceanum mare versus meridionales et orientales plagas" in the Bull of Nicholas V., 1454. These words he explains as shores of Africa trending south and east instead of southern and eastern shores. He advances no proof that the words *orientalis plaga* do not mean exactly what the English words "eastern shore" mean, *i. e.*, a shore facing east and trending north and south. He also ignores the grant of Calixtus III., 1456, of spiritual jurisdiction in Africa "a capitibus de Bojador et de Nam usque per totam Guineam, et ultra illam meridionalem plagam usque ad Indos." Now while the phrase which is used in the Bull of 1454 descriptive of Prince Henry's design to open to navigation "mare ipsum usque ad Indos qui Christi nomen colere dicuntur" no doubt refers to the subjects of Prester John, whose realm was generally located in Abyssinia in the early fifteenth century, the unqualified phrase "ad Indos" cannot be rigorously limited to Lesser India or Abyssinia. A glance at the map of Fra Mauro of 1459, which records the results of Prince Henry's explorations shows clearly enough in its practical elimination of the Indian Ocean that any plan of exploration which aimed at reaching the realm of Prester John, by water involved circumnavigating Africa and approaching as near Calicut as the distance from Portugal to Greece.

To test the assertion that the Latin letter is too ill-written to have come from a real scholar in Florence during the Renaissance Professor Wagner of Göttingen submitted it to Professor Wilhelm Meyer, who reported that so far as the language is concerned the letter contained nothing inconsistent with the supposition that it was written by a humanist. There is one linguistic test, however, that ought to be applied and that is to determine whether the writer really thought in Spanish or in Italian. If the letter was forged in Spain by some one of the Columbus family the Latin ought to reflect in places the Spanish idiom. If it clearly reflects the Italian idiom that would militate against its having been written by a man who has been speaking Spanish for years and in favor of its authenticity.

The assertion lettered (I) is too positive. In that very year 1474 King Alfonso granted to Farnão Telles any islands he might discover in the ocean sea except in the region of Guinea (Algun's *Documentos da Torre do Tombo*, 38). For a discussion of other points in Mr. Vignaud's argument which it has not been possible to take up here, the reader may be referred to the very thorough criticisms by Sophus Ruge in the *Zeitsch. der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, No. 6, 1902, and by Professor Hermann Wagner in the *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen* for Feb., 1902. In the view of both these critics Mr. Vignaud has not made out his case. Professor Ruge in particular seems unshaken in his conviction of the authenticity of the letters.

But a few words can be said of the hypothesis to account for the fraud. Señor de la Rosa accounts for it by Columbus's vanity. Just as he falsely claimed relationship to the French semi-piratical Admiral Coulon, so he wished to be thought the correspondent of scientific men and to show by the correspondence that he had formulated his plan many years before he carried it into execution. But why should he not have paraded this correspondence in some of his works? Mr. Vignaud believes that the letters were forged by Bartholomew Columbus to protect Christopher's claims to being a scientific and original thinker from being impaired by the widely current story that he got his ideas from a dying pilot who had been blown across the Atlantic. This pilot story Mr. Vignaud successfully puts upon a new footing by bringing out the fact that Las Casas testifies that it was generally believed in Hispaniola as early as ten years after Columbus's first voyage and by sailors who came on that voyage or later voyages with Columbus. It has commonly been regarded as a rumor which is first mentioned by Oviedo twenty odd years later. At the best, however, the explanations of the supposed forgery are mere conjectures. The lack of an hypothesis which will show how any real advantage could accrue to Columbus or any of his family which could serve as a sufficient motive reacts in favor of the authenticity of the documents, and Las Casas's firm belief in them must count heavily in the same direction, although it must be said that he believed and reported much about Columbus that seems irreconcilable with the records.

It must be acknowledged in any case that Mr. Vignaud's first publication in this field of studies, making all due deductions for errors and misprints due to haste, for some cases of begging the question, of reasoning in a circle, and of forced interpretation, is a remarkable piece of work. It arouses a keen interest not only in his proposed study of the early Portuguese voyages but particularly in the work which Señor de la Rosa has in preparation. Both are radical iconoclasts and their trenchant challenge of the accepted critical structure of the history of Columbus will, by the discussion evolved, turn the light on the obscurer parts of the foundations. The present writer must acknowledge that it has for him put a very large interrogation-point after the Toscanelli letters and map and that while he feels that successful replies may be made to many of Mr. Vignaud's points there still remains enough to compel for the present a suspense of judgment. If only Señor de la Rosa is able to fulfill the large promise of the title he has boldly prefixed to his pamphlet!

EDWARD GAYLORD BOURNE.

Europäische Politik im cyprischen Krieg. 1570-1573. By PAUL HERRE. Erster Teil; Vorgeschichte und Vorverhandlungen. (Leipzig: Dieterich. 1902. Pp. xi, 165.)

DON JUAN and the Battle of Lepanto have had their historians, Stirling-Maxwell, Boglietti, Porreño Rosell, Jurien de la Gravière, and Manfroni, not to mention a host of other writers of the dilettante, nation-